

Message Text

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21

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SAB-01 SAM-01 SSM-03 OMB-01 /088 W

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R 100515Z AUG 76

FM USINT BAGHDAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3464

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 1109

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IZ

SUBJ: THE WEEK IN REVIEW, BAGHDAD

REF: (A) TEHRAN 7872, (B) BAGHDAD 1022, (C) BAGHDAD 1077

1. SUMMARY: VERY LITTLE IS HAPPENING ON POLITICAL OR ECONOMIC SCENE IN BAGHDAD SO FAR THIS AUGUST. FACED BY CONTINUING SHORT TERM CASH FLOW/MANAGEMENT PROBLEMS, GOI HAS SIGNED NO MAJOR PROJECT CONTRACTS IN PAST THREE WEEKS. INTERNATIONALLY, PRINCIPAL FOCUS IS ON FORTHCOMING NON-ALIGNED SUMMIT IN COLOMBO. ARMY APPEARS TO BE TIED DOWN ALONG SYRIAN FRONTIER AND IN KURDISTAN. END SUMMARY.

2. GOI ATTEMPT TO CONCILIATE KURDS IS PARTIALLY, AT LEAST, IN RESPONSE TO SPORADIC LOW-LEVEL INCIDENTS IN NORTH. WE HAVE SEEN, CONFIDENTIAL

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HOWEVER, NO INDICATION AS YET THAT ANY KURDS DISPERSED OVER

SOUTHERN IRAQ HAVE BEEN ALLOWED TO RETURN HOME. RUMORS AND UN-SUBSTANTIATED REPORTS ARE AFOOT THAT SOME IRAQI TROOPS ARE BEING SHIFTED FROM SYRIAN BORDER TO KURDISTAN AND SOME OTHERS MAY SOON RETURN TO BARRACKS. SADDAM HUSSEIN'S TOUR OF THE NORTH IN EARLY JULY DEMONSTRATED IRAQI CONCERN TO KEEP LID ON IN KURDISTAN. WE HAVE CONFIRMATION THAT GOI, THROUGH IRAQI DELEGATION COMPOSED MAINLY OF MUKHABARAT (INTELLIGENCE) PERSONNEL AND ABDUL SAMAD HAMID, RCC LIAISON OFFICER RCC WITH IRAN FOR KURDISH AFFAIRS (REF. A), HAS APPROACHED KURDS IN IRAN WITH SOME FORM OF AMNESTY OFFER. SUBSTANCE OF IRAQI PROPOSALS, HOWEVER, NOT AVAILABLE TO US AT THIS TIME. LOCAL MEDIA COMMENT ON KURDISH AFFAIRS, INCLUDING BARZANI'S ACTIONS IN THE US, IS NOW CONSPICUOUSLY ABSENT.

3. RUMORS OF DISAFFECTION AMONG IRAQI TROOPS ROASTING IN DESERT ON SYRIAN BORDER ARE RIFE. HOWEVER, THERE IS NO INDICATION THAT GRUMBLING DOES MORE THAN EXPRESS ANNOYANCE WITH HEAT AND FRUSTRATION WITH APPARENT FUTILITY OF TROOP MOVEMENT PLOY. ALSO ALL CONSCRIPTS WHOSE TOUR OF DUTY WERE DUE TO END THIS SUMMER HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT THEY WILL BE EXTENDED FOR THE DURATION OF THE TROUBLES WITH SYRIA.

4. IN AUGUST 8 PRESS INTERVIEW, FONMIN HAMMADI MADE FOLLOWING POINTS REGARDING CONSENSUS APPROACH PREFERRED BY IRAQ AT COLOMBO SUMMIT (REF B):

- (A) ONLY ISSUES FOR WHICH GENERAL AGREEMENT COULD BE EXPECTED SHOULD BE RAISED; ISOLATED ISSUES OF CONCERN ONLY TO INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO DISRUPT THE CONFERENCE.
- (B) IRAQ CAN NOT AGREE TO PARTICIPATION IN THE CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS BY ANY STATE THAT IS MEMBER OF A MILITARY ALLIANCE.
- (C) IRAQ HAS PROPOSED A PROCEDURAL SHIFT IN FAVOR OF OPEN DEBATES ON PUBLIC ISSUES.
- (D) THE SYSTEM AND TECHNIQUES OF THE NON-ALIGNED COORDINATING COMMITTEE SHOULD BE REFORMED.
- (E) IRAQ'S POSITION ON PALESTINE IS TO SUPPORT "ESSENTIALLY AND GENERALLY ACCEPTED" PROPOSALS WHICH UNDERLINE "THE NATIONAL RIGHTS OF THE ARAB PEOPLE OF PALESTINE" AND SEEK THE WITHDRAWAL "OF ZIONIST FORCES FROM ALL OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES AT NO POLITICAL COST TO THE ARAB PEOPLE".

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5. SYRIAN PERFIDY REMAINS MAJOR PREOCCUPATION OF PRESS. RECENT TV DRAMA SHOWING CAPUTED SYRIAN "SPY" AND FRONT PAGE STORY OF "NATIONALIST" SYRIAN ARMY OFFICER MURDERED BY SYRIAN REGIME ATTEMPT TO SUSTAIN PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN. MEDIA PLEASED TO QUOTE OR MISQUOTE WIRE-SERVICE AND EVEN "JERUSALEM POST" ARTICLES ABOUT ISRAELI ASSISTANCE TO CHRISTIANS IN LEBANON. GOI CONTINUES TO USE FRONT ORGANIZATIONS, RATHER THAN GOI SPOKESMEN, TO CONDEMN SYRIAN-PLO ACCORD IN LEBANON. SYRIAN REGIME (RATHER THAN PLO) IS

BLAMED FOR ACCORD. GOI TREATMENT OF PALESTINIAN ROLE IS AS UNDER-
STANDING AS POSSIBLE.

6. COMMENT: WHILE THE IRAQI REGIME IS FURIOUS WITH PLO FOR
COMPROMISING WITH THE SYRIANS IN LEBANON, GOI ATTEMPTS TO MAIN-
TAIN OPEN LINES TO PLO AS WELL AS LESS MODERATE PALESTINIAN
GROUPS IN ANTICIPATION OF EVENTUAL COLLAPSE OF THE ACCORD. AT
THIS TIME IT IS DIFFICULT TO SEE WHAT MORE THE IRAQIS COULD
REALISTICALLY DO FOR THE PALESTINIANS IN LEBANON BEYOND CONTINUING
PRESUMED INFUSION OF ARMS AND MONEY, MAINTAINING THE MEDIA CAM-
PAIGN AGAINST SYRIA, AND WAITING UNTIL THE SYRIAN-PLO UNDERSTANDING
UNRAVELS. IN THE MEANTIME GOI IS CONCENTRATING ON MAJOR EFFORT
IRAQIS WILL MAKE AT COLOMBO. THE DRAMA OF SADDAM HUSSEIN'S
PROBABLE APPEARANCE ON THE COLOMBO STAGE AND THE POSSIBILITY OF A
GENEROUS RECONCILIATION WITH THE KURDS SHOULD PARTIALLY ALLEVIATE
THE SENSE OF FRUSTRATION CAUSED BY THE SETBACKS THAT IRAQI
FOREIGN POLICY HAS RECENTLY EXPERIENCED IN LEBANON.
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